

AMENDMENT

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1 (currently amended): A crate system for transporting items wherein said crate system comprises:

a first set of structural tubes that are substantially U shaped;

a first set of beams;

each of said first set of beams having an open slot along the length of said first set of beams extending partially across the upper surface of each of said first set of beams to form overextending lips; ~~and~~

a first fastening mechanism for securing said first set of structural U tubes in a spaced relationship to one another in a substantially upright position to said first set of beams by engagement through said open slots against said overextending lips;

a second set of structural tubes shaped in a substantially U shape;

a second set of beams;

each of said second set of beams having an open slot along the length of said second set of beams extending partially across the upper surface of each of said second set of beams to form overextending lips;

a second fastening mechanism for securing said second set of structural U-shaped tubes in a substantially upright position in spaced relationship to one another to said second set of beams by engagement through said open slots against said overextending lips; and

a securing mechanism for securing said assembled first set of structural U-shaped tubes to said assembled second set of structural U-shaped tubes.

Claims 2-4 (canceled):

Claim 5 (currently amended): The crate system of claim 1 wherein said first set of structural U-shaped tubes first fastening mechanism includes:

~~each of said first set of structural tubes shaped in a substantially U shape; and~~

~~said first fastening mechanism includes~~ spring nuts mounted in said open slot and a threaded fastener engaging through each of said first set of structural tubes into said spring nuts.

Claim 6 (canceled):

Claim 7 (currently amended): The crate system of claim 1 wherein ~~said crate system further includes:~~

~~a second set of structural tubes;~~
~~a second set of beams;~~
~~a second fastening mechanism for securing said second set of structural tubes in a spaced relationship to one another to said second set of beams; and~~
~~a securing mechanism for securing said assembled first set of structural tubes to said assembled second set of structural tubes wherein said securing mechanism includes at least one beam extending the length of said crate and fasteners securing said assembled first set of structural tubes to said assembled second set of structural tubes.~~

Claim 8 (canceled)

Claim 9 (currently amended): The crate system of claim 1 ~~wherein said crate system~~ wherein said securing mechanism further includes:

~~each of said first set of structural tubes shaped in a substantially U shape;~~
~~said fastening mechanism secures said first set of structural tubes in a substantially upright position spaced from each other on said first set of beams;~~
~~a second set of structural tubes shaped in a substantially U shape;~~
~~a second set of beams;~~
~~a second fastening mechanism for securing said second set of structural tubes in a substantially upright position in spaced relationship to one another to said second set of beams;~~

and

~~a securing mechanism for securing said assembled first set of structural tubes to said assembled second set of structural tubes wherein said securing mechanism includes at least one channel member extending the length of said crate and fasteners securing said assembled first set of structural tubes to said assembled second set of structural tubes.~~

Claim 10 (currently amended): A method for using a crate system for transporting items wherein said method comprises:

- providing a first set of structural substantially U-shaped tubes;
- providing a first set of beams having an open slot extending partially across the upper surface of each of said first set of beams forming overextending lips;
- providing a first fastening mechanism; and
- securing said first set of structural tubes in a spaced relationship to one another in a substantially upright position to said first set of beams by said first fastening mechanism engaging through said open slots against said overextending lips;
- providing a second set of structural tubes shaped in a substantially U shape;
- providing a second set of beams;
- providing a second fastening mechanism;
- securing said second set of structural U-shaped tubes in a substantially upright position in spaced relationship to one another to said second set of beams with said second fastening mechanism;
- providing a securing mechanism; and
- securing said assembled first set of structural U-shaped tubes to said assembled second set of structural U-shaped tubes with said securing mechanism.

Claims 11-13 (canceled):

Claim 14 (previously presented): The method of claim 10 wherein said method further includes:

said step of providing said first set of structural tubes includes shaping each of said first set of structural tubes in a substantially U shape; and

providing spring nuts on said first fastening mechanism mounted in said open slot and a threaded fastener engaging through each of said first set of structural tubes into said spring nuts.

Claim 15 (canceled):

Claim 16 (currently amended): The method of claim 10 wherein said method further includes:

~~providing a second set of structural tubes;~~
~~providing a second set of beams;~~
~~providing a second fastening mechanism;~~
~~securing said second set of structural tubes in a spaced relationship to one another to~~
~~said second set of beams with said second fastening mechanism;~~
~~providing a securing mechanism; and~~
securing said assembled first set of structural tubes to said assembled second set of structural tubes wherein said securing mechanism includes at least one beam extending the length of said crate and fasteners securing said assembled first set of structural tubes to said assembled second set of structural tubes with said securing mechanism.

Claim 17 (canceled):

Claim 18 (currently amended): The method of claim 10 wherein said method further includes:

~~shaping each of said first set of structural tubes in a substantially U shape;~~
~~securing said first set of structural tubes in a substantially upright position spaced from~~
~~each other on said first set of beams with said first fastening mechanism;~~
~~providing a second set of structural tubes shaped in a substantially U shape;~~
~~providing a second set of beams;~~